



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

In the January *Out West* (Vol. XX, No. 1) begins a series of "Early California Reminiscences" by Gen. John Bidwell. The editorial note tells us that for more than fifty years John Bidwell was one of the foremost citizens of California. He went there when Mexican rule was still in force, and after annexation took a prominent part in the development of the State. The series is concluded in the August number.

The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society, Volume IV, Number 4, contains an article entitled, "The Origin and Authorship of the Bancroft Pacific States Publications: a History of a History—I," by William Alfred Morris, which is of wide interest in the Southwest. It sketches the lives of Hubert Howe Bancroft and his collaborators, tells something of their ideals and their methods, gives approximately the amount contributed by each to the published work, and estimates its value. The materials which Mr. Morris used in its preparation seems to have been chiefly Bancroft's *Literary Industries* (Volume XXXIX of Bancroft's Works), letters of Bancroft, and published and unpublished statements of his collaborators.

It has long been an open secret that Bancroft is not the sole author of the thirty-nine octavo volumes bearing his name on the title-page. The fact that he tactily claims sole credit would naturally lead to the inference that such collaborators as aided him must have been men of inferior ability, since otherwise they would have demanded recognition of their work. Mr. Morris brings out the fact, however, that they really were well-fitted for their work, and that one of them was already an author of established reputation when she joined the Bancroft library force. Need of one kind or another seems to have reduced them all to the necessity of submitting to the agreement that so long as they remained on Bancroft's library staff, they were to claim no public recognition.

Bancroft was a native of Ohio, who went to California in 1853, while still a young man. In the course of several years he built up a flourishing bookselling and publishing business. In the year 1859, the company happened to find itself engaged in the publication of a hand-book almanac. The small collection made for this purpose was the nucleus of the great library of books and manuscripts relating to the history of the Pacific coast, which Bancroft afterward collected in Europe and America.

Long before it was finished, the plan of a complete history of the western half of North America had taken shape in his mind. His first idea was to have his assistants classify and index the material, take notes, and "prepare manuscript in the rough." His part was to be to map out and direct the work, and re-write the manuscript. As time went on, however, and the scope of the work grew, he found it necessary to assign the "assistants," as he calls them, certain parts to work up in practically finished form for the printer. He was, in the main, therefore, simply a managing editor. He was the actual author, as appears from Mr. Morris's analysis, of only about four of the completed volumes. The *North Mexican States and Texas*, it may here be noted, was not Bancroft's work at all. The first volume of it was written entirely by Henry Lebbeus Oak. In the second, the Texas part is by J. J. Platfield; the rest of the volume is by a Finlander, who wrote under the name of William Nemos.

Mr. Bancroft's lack of frankness, his failure to apprehend the ethics of authorship, could not fail to bring discredit upon his work. His business instincts and training, too, while they made him in some respects an excellent director of a great undertaking, led him to hurry his collaborators, with a view to saving expense, and, what was worse, to distort the facts so as to make the work popular. Moreover, as is the case with any contemporary history, much of the work suffered from a lack of perspective.

It can not be denied, however, as Mr. Morris justly shows, that in collecting and in organizing this immense amount of material, much of which would have been lost with the passing of the Western pioneers, Bancroft has done thankworthy service to humankind. "He who shall come after me," he says in a letter quoted by Mr. Morris, "will scarcely be able to undermine my work by laying an-

other and deeper foundation. . . . He may add to or alter my work, for I shall not know or be able to tell everything, but he can never make a complete structure of his own." Nor is this an idle boast. Take, for instance, the Bancroft history of Texas. It is a minor part of the complete work; it is not hard to find in it serious errors; yet it is based upon an immense mass of material which no previous historian had touched; and it is the best detailed history of Texas extant. There is much Texas material, to be sure, that even Bancroft never knew of; and the historian of the future will have much to add, as well as much to work over; yet he will find it necessary to work upon the foundation Bancroft has laid.